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### ***Two Northeast Indiana Schools to Receive \$30,000 Grants for New Heating/Cooling Systems***

FORT WAYNE – Students at two elementary schools in Allen and Wells counties will soon have a better climate in which to learn, thanks to a state grant awarded by Lt. Governor Joe Kernan today.

The Metropolitan School District of Southwest Allen County and the Northern Wells Community Schools each received a \$30,000 Alternative Power & Energy grant from the Indiana Department of Commerce's Energy and Recycling Office to assist with the installation of new WaterFurnace geothermal heat pumps.

"We couldn't be more pleased with the commitment shown by these school districts in investing in geothermal heating and cooling systems in their new facilities," said Kernan, who serves as the director of Commerce. "By using the renewable energy present in the earth, these buildings will reduce demand upon the electrical grid, eliminate their need for natural gas and prevent the emission of thousands of tons of air pollutants each year."

In southwest Allen County, the geothermal system will be installed at the new Covington Elementary School on West Hamilton Road. The school will use a system incorporating 200 vertical bore holes in a ground loop and 67 WaterFurnace heat pumps to provide all heating and cooling and much of the hot water for the school.

In northern Wells County, the Commerce funding will be used for the geothermal system in the new Lancaster Elementary School, located on State Road 1 in Bluffton. The school will use a horizontal ground loop and 92 WaterFurnace heat pumps within the building to supply all heating and cooling for the building. Both schools also feature other energy conserving measures, such as ventilation air heat recovery and variable speed motors on main pumps.

The new equipment will be purchased from Fort Wayne's WaterFurnace International, a leading a manufacturer of geothermal heat pumps. "The fact that these projects support both the environment and the local economy makes it even more attractive," added Kernan.

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Geothermal systems heat and cool buildings by using the relatively constant temperature of soil or surface water as a heat source or heat sink, which provides heating and cooling for buildings. Through loops of pipe embedded in the ground, heat is transferred from a building's interior to the outside loop in order to cool, or from the outside loop back into the building to provide warmth.

By using the ground to provide thermal energy for the system, the use of conventional energy is greatly reduced. Because the ultimate source of the thermal energy used in these systems energy is the sun, geothermal heat pump systems also replace fossil fuels with renewable solar energy, reducing both fossil energy usage and the polluting emissions that they create.

Commerce's Office of Energy and Recycling, within the Community Development Division, administers the Alternative Power & Energy Grant Program. It offers grants for the installation of renewable energy systems to businesses, institutions and units of local government in Indiana. The program offers grants of up to \$30,000 or 30 percent of project costs, whichever is less.

For more information about this or any other Commerce program, contact your regional Commerce office at 800.463.8081 or visit the Web site at [www.indianacommerce.com](http://www.indianacommerce.com).

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